

Hormones by [luxuriousvoyage11](#)

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Language: English

Characters: Dustin Henderson, Eleven (Stranger Things), Jim "Chief" Hopper, Joyce Byers, Lucas Sinclair, Maxine "Max" Mayfield, Mike Wheeler, Will Byers

Relationships: Eleven & Mike Wheeler, Eleven/Mike Wheeler, Joyce Byers & Jim "Chief" Hopper, Joyce Byers/Jim "Chief" Hopper, Maxine "Max" Mayfield & Lucas Sinclair, Maxine "Max" Mayfield/Lucas Sinclair, Will Byers & Eleven & Dustin Henderson & Maxine "Max" Mayfield & Lucas Sinclair & Mike Wheeler

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Summary:

El's unpredictable teenage emotions get the better of her at movie night.

Hormones

Almost every Saturday night, the party gathered in the Wheeler's cluttered basement for movie night. Each member was responsible for bringing 1-3 movies, new or re-watched favorites, depending on whose turn it was that week.

It was El's pick tonight and according to the majority of 15-year-olds sprawled out on the couch and floor, she had brought the worst possible choices: Sixteen Candles, Footloose, and Valley Girl.

"Oh, my god El, really!" Dustin complained, "these are so girly!" "Seriously!" Lucas added, "we don't wanna watch this romantic shit!"

Max roughly elbows her boyfriend, defending her best friend, "oh yeah, like we wanna watch your nerdy sci-fi bullshit! There's more to them than just romance also!"

Usually, her friend's constant bickering never bothered her; in fact, she always found it entertaining. Similar to Holly, at a noisy dinner, her head would snap back and forth to all of the loud voices bouncing off one another.

This time, however, she just felt annoyed; in fact, she had been feeling irritable all week - "moody" as Hopper put it. She was happy one minute, talking with her adopted father at dinner and then he'd make a comment that either had her on the verge of tears or storming into her room.

And now, between the critique of her favorite movies and the heightened bickering, she felt something inside her snap.

"Can you all just shut up!" Eleven screeched, "we won't watch my stupid movies then!"

A dead, awkward silence fell over the room, everyone looking at the petite brunette in utter shock. El, even now, with a more advanced vocabulary and an overall improvement of social skills, was always sweet and soft-spoken with everyone, but especially her friends.

She was similar to Will in that way; the peacekeeper when Mike and Lucas would buttheads or Max and Dustin fought over the last of Mrs. Wheeler's casserole.

She shot up from her seat on the couch, embarrassed by her outburst and, truthfully, overwhelmed by what seemed like uncontrollable emotions stirring inside her. She jogged over to the small bathroom and slammed the door, putting her hands through her hair as she sat on the toilet.

"Look what you two fucking assholes did," Mike growls after no one speaks for a moment, "can't you just ever keep your damn mouths shut!"

"Oh, c'mon, El knows we don't watch that!" Dustin defends, "we always make fun of those chick flicks and she never gets mad!"

Mike gives him and Lucas one more dirty look before making his way over to the bathroom and knocking lightly, "El, it's me," he mumbles.

Max is staring at Lucas with squinted eyes, equally as mad as Mike. "What, Max!" Lucas says as defensively as Dustin, "how was I supposed to know she'd get so upset!"

"You could've just been nice, to begin with!" Max yelps, "those are her favorite movies and she always trades nights with you idiots so you can bring in whatever new nerd shit is out!"

Will doesn't know how or why this thought pops into his head but he's quickly ushering Max over to the corner, away from the two guilty looking boys.

"This is gonna sound really weird," the short boy whispers, "I'm only asking because my mom explained it to me once when my cousin was over," he rambles, "but do you know if El has her, uh,"

Max's eyes shoot open, her mouth agape, knowing immediately what he's on about and not believing she hadn't realized it sooner.

She was young when she "became a woman" as her mother had put it to her at just 11 years old; but she remembers all of the similar symptoms - outbursts, irritability, grogginess.

She looks back at Will who saw the matching conclusion on her face and in unison, they whisper "poor, El."

Mike was sitting on the cold bathroom floor, a sobbing El sitting between his legs, her face in the crook of his neck. She had gone from annoyed to angry to her bottom lip quivering in the first five minutes of him entering the bathroom.

He had just quietly sat down beside her, next to the toilet and grabbed her two hands that seemed to be abrading her scalp. Still looking at the ground, she snatched her hands away and put them back in her hair, unconsciously pulling at the long curly strands.

"El," he said softly. She shook her head, refusing to meet his gaze.

She honestly had no idea what was going on with her, so full of anger and sadness and confusion; but over what? Her friends' harmless teasing?

Mike had called out her name twice more before firmly saying, "Jane."

Her head snapped up to meet his brown eyes, clouded with the concern she had yet to see.

"Don't call me that," she snapped.

It's not that she didn't like the name Jane; in another lifetime, she would've loved to have been Jane Ives and grown up with her mom and aunt in that rustic house full of knick-knacks.

And she loved her life as Jane Hopper, though everyone still calls her El, surrounded by the chief who saved her that terrible winter and all of her friends that kept her memory alive for 353 days.

But just the name Jane reminded her of that brief time in Chicago, robbing stores and almost choking a man to death; she always tries to remind herself that, while he wasn't an innocent man, she wasn't capable of taking a life in such an intimate way.

"Then please El," Mike said, trying to coax her out of whatever this was, "tell me what's wrong and we can fix it, okay?"

And just like that, the tears came and she slid off the toilet seat into her boyfriend's embrace, muffling her sobs into his gray sweatshirt. She's not sure how long they sat there, him just silently stroking the back of her head that was covered in shoulder-length curls.

She shyly met his gaze, her sobbing halted but eyes still full of unshed tears. He wiped some wetness off her face with his thumb, slowly caressing the side of her cheek while his brown eyes searched her whole face for some type of answer to make her feel better.

"El, please," Mike all but begged, "what's wrong?"

She swallowed the lump in her throat at his pleading tone, feeling the pain in his voice caused by just her sadness.

"I....I don't know," she stuttered, "this whole week, even last week, I've been feeling so," she pauses as she recalls the word Hopper used, "moody. One second, I'm fine and then another I'm so angry or crying," she says frustrated before mumbling, "I feel like I'm going crazy."

Mike shakes his head, bringing the hand that was on her cheek to smoothen out her tangled curls, "you're not crazy, El," he reassures, "it's probably just your hormones."

She tilted her head to the side, remembering that word from one of her tutoring sessions over the summer. In order to start 9th grade with the rest of friends, five days worth of math, English, and science lessons were given from either Jonathan, Joyce, or Nancy.

"Hormones," she repeats slowly, "from puberty, right?" Mike nodded at her, a small smile on his face.

"Exactly, El, it happens to all of us," he reassures, "teenagers get moody since, you know, we're all going through those changes and stuff," he says, cringing at how inarticulate that came out.

She nods thoughtfully before her face falls, "are they gonna be mad that I yelled at them," she asked, shame all over her face.

Mike peppers kisses all over her face, starting from her forehead, to her cheek, to her chin, to her other cheek, and finally, on her nose, in

hopes to get a smile out of her; he's happy to see her let out a giggle and playfully push him away.

"Of course not, El," he says, standing up to his full 5'10 stature and extending his arm down for her to grab his hand. "Let's go out and see them, yeah?"

Nodding, she accepts and intertwines their fingers before cautiously leaving the bathroom.

She walks out to see the beginning of Sixteen Candles paused on the television, Lucas and Dustin surrounded by 4 plates of Eggos and wearing sheepish smiles on their faces.

"We're sorry, El," Lucas says immediately.

"So sorry," Dustin interrupts, "we were being total assholes and it was rude of us," he says sincerely.

El let's go of Mike's hands and runs towards the two boys with a huge smile, engulfing them both in a big hug and giggling at their absurd set up of slightly burnt waffles.

Mike, Will, and Max share a knowing look before running over to join the hug. They all lay out in front of the tv for the rest of the night and watch nearly six hours of romantic dramas.

A few nights later, Hopper rushes over to the Byers in need of assistance from Joyce who pats his back reassuringly before handing him a plastic bag.

Will quickly slips in two chocolate bars, earning a proud smile from Joyce who sends a frazzled Hopper on his way.